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## Prominent Kingstree Negro Makes Frank Statement

To the people of Williamsburg County, South Carolina:

There are times to speak and times to keep quiet and this is a time to speak.

I am a negro who was born and raised in your county. At present I am serving as local preacher in St. Paul M.E. Church near Kingstree, S. C. During the week I farm my own land and also run a licensed taxi service in town. I belong to the Free & Accepted Masons, to the Grand Order of Odd Fellows and to the Joint Stock Society. It has been reported that I belong to the NAACP also.

First, let me say to my white friends that I have never belonged to the NAACP and never expect to. I'm too free and happy praising God, working hard and living in the friendship of both races.

I ask you to show this to your colored friends.

Second, let me say to my colored brethren and sisters:

You are doing a lot of talking about White Citizens Councils. You say they are not like a bunch of young drunks whooping and hollering on a possum hunt. You say Councils are springing up quiet as mushrooms in the night. And, you say right. Those are smart steady men and they mean business. They have told you there won't be any mixed schools hereabouts and I'm telling you you can depend on that. You can quit your secret worrying and fretting about mixed schools for most of you don't want them any more than whites do. You just didn't know how to keep from having them.

I can say this to any negro who has it sticking in his craw that he can't be happy without trying mixed schools. All you have to do to get your heart's desire is buy a ticket to Philly or other points north where they are already mixed. Nobody has to tell you that colored children don't learn books as fast as whites. But see for yourself how pitiful your big colored children will look in the same grades with smaller white children. Have you got enough money to dress your brood in clothes they won't be ashamed of? Go ahead and try it if you must. But don't be fool enough to slam the door in your white friends' faces before you go. You might want to come back like I did after I had lived up there a while. How, if you come home and find the door locked? Your old key won't be much good in a door fastened with a dozen tennypenny nails. Who is going to help you then? Will the NAACP give you a hand-out? Laugh, folks, laugh!

The years I lived in Philly and New York I made big money as a house painter but it took it all to keep going. When I finally came back home I hardly had one dime to rub against another. What did I do? I went to my white friends and got a job. Later, who lent me money to start farming? Who sold me seed and fertilizer and mules on credit? When dry weather ruined my crops, who let my debts ride till the next year? Who let me have groceries and clothes on credit when I needed them? When I was sick, who fed and clothed me free? Not the Red Cross, not the Welfare Department, not the NAACP, but my own white friends. I say God bless them and their seed.

Now don't take the notion that I'm talking against my own race. I am not. I'm trying with the help of God to lead my people right. I'm warning all you negroes not to be misled by a few NAACP folks you see strutting their stuff in your community. Remember the old saying, "Give a calf enough rope and he will hang himself." Just keep an eye on the calves around you and you are apt to see a show turn into a circus. If you are one of the calves, cut the rope now. Come out into the open and throw your weight for equal but separate schools where negro children can learn to take pride in their own race instead of being ashamed of it.

White Folks have politely appealed to us negroes to use sense and look far ahead but they won't be surprised if we don't because we never have. Right now, I'm not appealing to you colored people about the distant future, I'm telling you about the present. If you are in the NAACP you had better get out while the getting is good. The White Folks have told you straight and honest. They don't blame any negroes for joining before they realized the NAACP was set to stir up trouble between the races here at home. But now things have busted wide open. Common horse-sense will tell you that every negro who stays in the NAACP and stays in the South is planting briars in his own path and briars can grow powerfully fast in a southern climate.

Did you read in the papers about Councils in other counties "Exercising Economic Pressure?" Do you know what that means? I didn't either till I had it explained to me. In our kind of talk it means getting fired from a job or having your credit cut off. Be fair. If you were paying wages to a fellow and found he was double-crossing you, what would you do? You would fire him so quick it would make his head



swim. He would be lucky if he didn't get a kick in the pants for good measure. As for giving him credit, who? You?

If you think the NAACP will get those lost jobs back get somebody to explain the meaning of the news from Washington in the papers with big print in the top line saying, "Justice Department Lacking Interest in Economic Pressure."

Listen my colored brethren and sisters: Come out into the open and tell the world it's equal schools you want, not mixed. If you are too bashful, get somebody else to speak for you. Get on the winning side while you can. Forget the NAACP and the Supreme Court before they forget you. How long do you think they are going to stay in a lather trying to force mixed schools on South Carolina with all the whites, reared back on their hind legs, saying, "We won't have them!" and three-fourths the negroes slipping around to whisper, "We don't want them!" Take an open stand with your white and colored friends so things can settle down.

Let's all work together again on the program to build equal schools so your children can get a good education before they get gray-headed. Beg your Christian leaders to furnish you with good leadership. What this country needs is more Christian leaders on both sides who will teach their people to pray more and work toward friendship and peace and prosperity instead of mixing breeds against God's plan.

My friends, let all the nit-wit talking about mixing races go in one ear and out the other. It was God Almighty's plan to have a white race and a negro race and when Gabriel blows his last trumpet, the two races will still be on earth to answer. The sprinkling of mixed-breeds will only show that both races were human and sinful and standing in the need of prayer.

If I were a betting man I would bet you that you'll see the day before too long that Northern Big Shots in the NAACP will get so sick of South Carolina negroes, just the mention of one will make their stomachs turn upside down. Here's why. When they came down here, we negroes thought they were pawing the earth, fairly kicking up gravel. They must have worked hard enough to frazzle an ox organizing NAACP chapters and sweet-talking suckers. They drew up petitions and got negroes from far and near to sign them. They must have felt sure they had the South by the tail for a down-hill drag. From the looks of news in the papers, they must have felt mighty steady in their saddles for they sure started driving their horses at a fast gallop. Then somehow, their

horses began to stumble. First one and then another. What had happened? Why were so many negroes suddenly yelling their heads off to take their names off those petitions? What had happened, you ask? Nothing new. Our negroes were just up to their old tricks. I wonder if anybody ever told them that southern negroes are the best joiners on earth but the poorest stickers when it comes to following strange negroes. As for whites who step down on an equal footing with colored folks, we might pretend to respect them but when we get off to ourselves we call them Dressed Up White Trash or say their grandpa must have had some tar in his blood.

Of course southern negroes will follow any big talker a little while if there's some excitement going on. We love excitement. But just wait till the new begins to wear off. The leader will still be marching full speed ahead, thinking we are right at his heels. After a while he has to stop to catch his breath and mop his brow. That's when he glances behind him to see how we are making out. But there's not a negro in sight. All have taken to the bushes. Many are already making fast time by short cuts to reach trusted white friends who have already helped them out of more than one tight spot. Northerners don't want to believe it's like that down South so we let them think what they please. It's not our fault if they have to learn the hard way.

I've done a lot of traveling in my day and seen a lot of sights. And, I'm telling the world that South Carolina is a good place for negroes who want to be good citizens. My colored brothers and sisters, pray to God to give you the wisdom to teach your children to teach their children never to let strangers come into South Carolina and mess things up for our race. Watch your step about signing petitions now and forever more. God's blessings be on you and your seed.

WEBSTER McCLARY

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P. O. Box 494, Kingstree, S. C.

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